

Madison River Rule Recommendations

Based on extensive public input the Department recommends a phased approach be implemented for recreation on the Madison River. The first phase (2021) would be a reporting requirement for all non-commercial river users; the second phase (2022) would be implementation of a cap and allocation system for commercial use and potentially also non-commercial users depending on work group recommendations and commission adoption of those recommendations; and the third phase (2023) would be a trial program for rest/rotation and walk/wade. The phases would be sequentially implemented starting in 2021 with thorough data collection and evaluation. The pilot programs would be re-evaluated after one year of implementation. Key to this phased approach will be a work group appointed by the Commission that will review implementation of the management actions and make recommendations to the Commission.

NEW RULE XIV WORK GROUP

Implement 2021

This rule was originally proposed in the FOAM petition to create a Commercial Use Work Group under the authority of the Region 3 River Recreation Manager. The recommendation is to broaden the scope of the working group to all river users and for the group to be appointed by and under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife commission with the purpose of evaluating recreation management on the Madison River and providing recommendations to the commission. The recommended new rule would include broadening the membership of the work group in recognition of the work group scope. The original intent of the work group proposal was for oversight of the commercial allocation system. The new rule would broaden this to include all recreational use on the river.

NEW RULE MADISON RIVER USE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Implement 2021

The proposed rule from both the FOAM and the GGTU petition was to create a Madison River Use Stamp which would be provided to users at no cost and with no limits and would have annual reporting requirements. The intent of the rule was to create a mechanism for non-commercial river users to report their use on the river. This information would then be later used when considering non-commercial caps and/or allocation systems. Issues were raised in public comments relative to enforcement and administration of the stamp. The recommendation is for all persons recreating on the Madison River to provide information on their trip as prescribed by the Department. The information gathered would be reported to the work group and commission. The Department is looking at a system using sign-in boxes like those used for Block Management, interviews and cameras to gather the necessary information without the requirement of a stamp.

NEW RULE IV LIMIT DEVELOPMENT ON MADISON RIVER

Implement 2021

The rule is recommended with the same intent as proposed with a slight language change to make it clear that development of new access sites below Greycliff would be limited to carry-in only amenities without boat ramp development.

NEW RULE XIII PLAN EVALUATION

Implement 2021

It is recommended that each phase of implementation be evaluated by the Department and the commission-appointed work group. After evaluation any changes will be recommended to the commission for adoption. The two pilot programs would be evaluated after one year of implementation. All rules governing recreation use on the Madison River will be reviewed every five years.

NEW RULE I MADISON RIVER FISHING OUTFITTER AND GUIDE TRIP CAP

Implement 2022

The recommendation is to implement a fishing outfitter cap using 2019 trip numbers which is 14,053 trips per year and to recommend that the workgroup (New Rule XIV) use information gathered from the reporting requirements to make recommendations to the Commission on a cap/allocation system for non-commercial users.

NEW RULES VI, VIII, X AND XV: COMMERCIAL CAP ALLOCATION SYSTEM

Any allocation system for use with the commercial cap would be developed by the work group and recommended to the commission for adoption.

NEW RULES VII AND IX: TRANSFERABILITY

Transferability of permits and trips was proposed in the petition received from FOAM. Transferability will not need to be addressed until the cap is implemented in 2022. The work group and/or adjusted state law will be critical to this issue.

NEW RULES XI AND XII: PERMIT APPLICATION, FEES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

It is recommended to not adopt the proposed rules as the requirements are already established for the Special Recreation Permits.

NEW RULE II REST/ROTATION OF MADISON RIVER COMMERCIAL USE TRIAL PROGRAM

Implement 2023

The recommendation is that rest/rotation would be implemented as a trial program per the rule proposal unless the work group provides an alternative recommendation to the Commission after the 2 years of data gathering of use on the river in 2021 and 2022.

NEW RULE III and V WALK/WADE TRIAL PROGRAM ON THE MADISON RIVER

Implement 2023

The recommendation is for Walk/Wade to be implemented as a trial program per the proposal in New Rule III unless the work group provides an alternative recommendation to the Commission after two years of gathering data on recreational use of the river.